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LB 748

can go in areas adjacent to facilities of the Metropolitan Utility District. So the point is, is that, in my opinion, the Metropolitan Utility District in Omaha and every city or municipality owned utility should be able to grow and expand with the city. I don't believe that they should be able to hopscotch and go clear out to Chadron. So what I tried to do, again, in this amendment was simply limit their growth to those areas that are adjacent to the facilities of the Metropolitan Utilities District. And again, you'll see this amendment only applies to the Metropolitan Utility District. This does not apply to the cities or the other municipally owned entities. But again, I think that this goes...it's my attempt to try to alleviate some of the concerns that the Metropolitan Utility District would try to go out to Chadron or McCook and offer gas out there. Now I will tell you also, from a consumer's perspective, those folks in Chadron or McCook would probably rejoice if the Metropolitan Utility District were to come out there because I have charts that show that their rates are actually lower than any other utility in the state. So again, this is a...try to...it's trying to control growth. It's trying to respond to those criticisms that the Metropolitan Utility District can reach farther than its intent, or should be allowed to, and that's what this amendment does. With that, again, I'd be happy to answer any questions. Thank you for your interest.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Bourne. You've heard the opening on AM1493 to the committee amendments to LB 748. (Visitors introduced.) On with discussion of the Bourne amendment, AM1493. Senator Beutler, followed by Senator Friend and others.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Senator Cudaback, members of the Legislature, I don't know about you, but I'm having trouble getting my hands around this whole thing and so, Senator Bourne, if we could, I'd like to go through some basic distinctions to get clear in my mind what's happening here. First of all, we have two separate bills, as I understand it, and the bills deal with the same subject matter to a certain extent. Is that correct? I would yield to Senator Bourne.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Bourne.